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BOOK WORLD NOTES

ELUSIVE ISABEL.

DIRT gets into the corners; PAUKA - HANA gets it out in quicker time than it takes to tell it.

All grocers should sell it; most of them do. If yours is one who has not caught on ring up Fred L. Waldron, Telephone 12.

The plot is original and daring supposing, as it does, an alliance between the Latin countries of Europe to regain their brief prestige on the American continent, and a fascinating woman whose name and purpose remain hidden from the reader for many pages, and who, in this vast international intrigue, plays with ambassadors and other important creatures of government as pawns. One enjoys the very audacity of the author's imagination and the skill with which he works out his idea. The scene is laid in Washington, "the drawing-room of the nation," and lies entirely amid the diplomatic circle, whose titles, costumes, manner and accent are deftly drawn upon for color and variety.

The story is humanly propelled chiefly by three persons, all of whom are interesting: First, Isabel, maintained in the atmosphere of romance from the outset; Campbell, chief of the secret service, and, of more importance to the reader, Grimm, his light-hand man, very impassive but very deep, delightfully nonchalant, whom commissions to find missing gold, or missing men, or to prevent a world-war, do not rouse from outward listlessness, and whose method of beginning work on a case is to place his "perfect shod" feet on his desk and sit thinking for an hour. The plot does not lag from the moment the Italian minister, sitting at dinner, receives the mysterious crested card of Isabel, through the scene in which the international Council sits masked and Grimm threatens to fire the bomb if he proposed compact is not destroyed, to the final situation in which Grimm—very grim he is indeed—forces himself into Isabel's home and causes the death of her brother. The presence of the mysterious girl, who is inexplicably concerned in all affairs, her repeated encounters between her and Grimm, thread all the situations together into a chain of mystery that seems to glitter more brightly than does any single brilliant in it. The reader is run up the blindfold of blind alleys, whence apparently there is no escape. When the final explanations are made, and the reader discovers that he has been doubly fooled, his respect for the author goes up another notch.

So swift is its movement, so sparkling in its style, so spontaneous are its surprises—there could not be a more delightful book for spring or summer reading. ELUSIVE ISABEL is the speeding arrow of a brilliant tale.

romances by Mary Roberts Rinehart, received two inquiries for the rights of translation into French of The Circular Staircase. Mrs. Rinehart's vogue has already been established in Germany, where there is always a great demand for detective stories.

SET IN SILVER by the Williamsons, Doubleday, Page and Co. New York City.

The Williamsons, whose latest story, "Set in Silver," has just been published by Doubleday, Page & Company, are very fond of the Riviera, whither they go in the early autumn, just when the English gardens are beginning to fade. By the middle of October, of course, there is summer on the Riviera. The roses are still in bloom, and the fresh new grass is green as emerald. This is, to be sure, an early time to come to the Riviera; but the Williamsons have a private villa not far from Monte Carlo, which used to be a shooting lodge of the former Prince of Monaco. Before the season really begins and friends come in, they write in the quiet, take long drives, and walks, and motor excursions.

About May they return to their old-fashioned garden in Surrey. There they live in a queer old house, as old as the days of Queen Elizabeth. It has a secret room in it, and the quaint antique furniture is said to represent the "finds" of a year's motoring in England.

IDEALS OF DEMOCRACY, by John T. Dye. The Bobbs-Merrill Co., Indianapolis.

John T. Dye, for many years general counsel of the Big Four Railroad, is the author of an important book published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company, and entitled "Ideals of Democracy." Mr. Dye's premise can best be stated in his own words: "We face," says he, "two opposing tendencies; one, the centralization of power in the industrial and financial world, and with it the control of the government in the hands of the few; the other the ownership of the plants and implements of industry, and the distribution of its products by the states. The two tendencies work out the same result—the destruction of equal opportunity. Democracy opposes both, and seeks to preserve the freedom of the individual by the equal administration of just laws." In order to bring to bear upon the subject full consideration of it from all the varying viewpoints, Mr. Dye very happily fancies a general discussion of the two "opposing tendencies" as in progress among passengers in the smoking compartment of a transcontinental train. Among those who take part in the conversation are a professor of political economy and sociology, a banker and miner, a civil engineer, a Catholic bishop, a professor of law in a Western law school, and another passenger who comes "from the mining camps of Colorado, where talk of human brotherhood would only excite derision, and where both sides have committed outrages that are a reproach to our civilization."

NOT A TRAINED MAN, by Ellen Glasgow. The Macmillan Co., New York City.

Readers and reviewers, alike, appear to be experiencing difficulty with the name of Miss Glasgow's new novel. "The Romance of a Plain Man" was the title Miss Glasgow bestowed upon the work. This, however, did not suit one critic, who promptly changed it to "The Romance of a Plain Woman," about as far away from the facts in the case as he could well get. Now a reader sends for a copy of "The Romance of a Trained Man." Inasmuch as the entire plot of the novel rests upon the fact that whatever training the hero got, he had to give himself, this is almost as uncalled for an error as the reviewer's entirely unwarranted reflections on the heroine's personal attractiveness. As a matter of fact, she is as beautiful as her lover is plain, and the romance is the world-old theme of the union of strength and loveliness.

ACCIDENTAL DEATH

An inquest was held on the body of the Japanese child, Tanabe Kuni-ga, who was killed on Thursday by being run over by a wagon. Muir-moto, the driver of the vehicle, gave evidence to the fact that the little fellow had been riding with him on the wagon and had tried to alight in a hurry, and had fallen between the front and hind wheel of the cart. The driver had picked the child up at once and had done all in his power to help the distracted parents.

The coroner's jury returned a verdict of accidental death and exonerated Muir-moto from any blame in the matter.

Falls Dead at Wedding.—Brilliant. Wis., June 16.—While the marriage vows of Miss Catherine Mulhoney and John Bartz, a leading businessman of this city, were being solemnized Miss Joseph Manlik, a friend of the bride and groom, who attended the ceremony, fell dead from apoplexy.

Owen Wister, Famous Novelist,
Rallying After Long Illness



Owen Wister, the novelist, is slowly recovering from a nervous collapse that halted his literary labors and threatened his life some time ago. Mr. Wister's case, which has puzzled some of the ablest physicians and nerve specialists in the country, dates from the time of the death of his mother nearly a year ago. The sad occurrence completely unbalanced the novelist, and after a time he sought to divert his mind by hard work. This coupled with his weakened condition, caused a collapse. A novel on which the author of "The Virginian" was at work has not been touched for several months.

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LITERARY NOTES.

The Bobbs-Merrill Company.

May, 1929.

Mary Roberts Rinehart had never written a detective story, or a long story of any sort, until an editor friend sent her a picture of Anna Katherine Green, asked her to hang it over her desk and under the inspiration of the author of The Pillage Ball to produce a detective yarn. Mrs. Rinehart was eager enough to be inspired but somehow the divine afflatus was slow to arrive. Then she went to Washington for a visit and on her way home happened to occupy lower berth number ten. She couldn't sleep and, as she lay there awake, the possibilities of a Pullman for a crime and mystery gradually broke upon her. THE MAN IN LOWER TEN was the result.

Emerson Hough, the author of 54-40 or Fight and The Mississippi Bubble, is very fond of outdoor life. It takes a good man to beat him when it comes to telling a story around the camp fire at night. While camping out in the Adirondacks with a party of his friends, the conversation turned on echoes and how plainly they could be heard. Echoes were getting "louder and louder" until silenced by the following statement by Mr. Hough:—"Out in the Rocky Mountains it takes eight hours to hear the echo of your voice. When I camp out there, and just before I pull the blankets around me for the night, I shout out, 'Time to get up!' and—do you believe it—the echo wakes me next morning!"

Emerson Hough, author of The Mississippi Bubble, Fifty-Four Forty or Fight, etc., has left for Europe to spend the summer. He will pursue his own way, without guide or guide book. Mr. Hough has been offered a very large salary by William Randolph Hearst to do special work for his newspapers, but has declined.

A Norwegian translation is being made of The Fortunes of Fibi, the popular story by Molly Elliot Sewall.

Within one week The Bobbs-Merrill Company, publishers of the mystery